

# NCAA Men's Basketball Championship: Second Round - Dayton vs Arizona

Saturday, March 23, 2024

Salt Lake City, Utah, USA

Delta Center

## Arizona Wildcats

## Coach Tommy Lloyd

## Jaden Bradley

## Caleb Love

### Media Conference

Arizona - 78, Dayton - 68

THE MODERATOR: We are joined by Arizona head coach Tommy Lloyd, along with sophomore guard Jaden Bradley and senior guard Caleb Love. We'll open up with a quick statement from Coach Lloyd.

TOMMY LLOYD: Really proud of our guys. Dayton's a heck of a ball club. I was hoping that we could really come out and get after them defensively and really just play with a bunch of active energy and kind of get them on their heels, and we did.

Unfortunately, they responded. But that's how these games go. We've been really talking about just being steady, staying locked in. Obviously, not getting too high, not getting too low. As a staff, we have a pretty active, emotional staff so we talked about us kind of taking a breath and just helping our guys stay in that zone.

Really proud of them. J.B. played amazing today and did a great job controlling the game. Caleb got off to a great start, had a rough patch, but he bounced back from that. That's with a winners do.

So really proud of these guys, and we're excited and honored to be able to continue to play.

THE MODERATOR: Now we'll open up for questions.

**Q. Jaden and Caleb, what goes into being able to show poise? They make that 10-0 run in the half and get closer in the second half and you guys kind of never wavered.**



JADEN BRADLEY: I'd just say shout out to our coaches. Coach Murph and Coach Ken did a great job with the scout. I think at halftime we came out, trusted the plan, even though Dayton came back with a run. We just stayed poised.

CALEB LOVE: That's key, staying calm in those moments when they're making a run. Not panicking. We stuck to the plan, like J.B. said, and we got the job done.

**Q. Jaden and Coach, I wanted to ask you about Caleb's run in the first half, 13 points, 5 of 7. When he gets it going like that, just what is it able to do for you guys offensively? How does it open things up?**

JADEN BRADLEY: Caleb's a great player. He can get it going at any time. Playing within the offense and him finding the shots. I think Big O does a great job kind of creating double-teams and is able to get Caleb, get him going.

TOMMY LLOYD: I mean, for me, it's pretty simple. I mean, obviously, he's a great player. I knew he was going to play good today. I knew he had the look. It's a rough patch for these guys. Caleb's been through a lot in his career. You hit a rough patch where you start getting accolades and honors and start thinking about things. I knew he had to play through a little bit. I knew today he was going to play good. There was no way he wasn't going to play good in this game. He had a good stretch in the Long Beach State game and didn't play well in the Pac-12 Tournament. The dude's a baller. I have complete trust in him.

**Q. Caleb, I wanted to congratulate you. With today's scoring output, you are now, amongst active players, you have the most points in March Madness history. What about March and this time brings out the best in you?**

CALEB LOVE: I think it's a big stage. You want to play in these moments, these big-time games. I dreamed of this as a kid, watching March Madness, wanted to be on the stage and I think I rise to the occasion.



Whatever I can do to get the team to win, scoring, rebounding, play making, whatever I've got to do. Defense. That's what I'm going to try to do.

**Q. Caleb, you had that game two years ago against Baylor where you guys were up big, and then you went out of the game and they were able to come back. You win in overtime. Being able to keep yourself in the game and being able to help the team get through it, did any of that come into your head?**

CALEB LOVE: No, I wasn't really thinking about two years ago. That was two years ago. But I was just trying to figure any way I could get the team to win as far as helping the team.

And Coach Lloyd has stuck with me all year and kind of keeping me team oriented. So that's what I've been focusing on. And we've been succeeding so far.

**Q. Tommy, this second half, you managed -- you started to take the air out of the ball toward the end. What was the point of that, and then also going with the small lineup that you were using down the stretch?**

TOMMY LLOYD: Well, I thought they got pretty comfortable against the looks they were giving us. Obviously, we knew it was going to be an interesting dynamic when you have a mobile, pick-and-pop kind of athletic big like Holmes and a big hoss like Big O, there's going to be give and take.

Our plan with Big O got us off to a good start early. They got comfortable and started attacking a little bit. I wanted to give them a different look. I think we did it right before a media, because I wanted to get a look at it, and then it worked. We got a turnover the first time we did it.

I said, hey, let's ride this out and see if we can change the course of the game. They had to start attacking us differently and get them out of their rhythm.

**Q. To the student-athletes, just what you can say about as you advance to the Sweet 16, there's been adversity at different times this season. Can you pinpoint a moment that you felt was an adjustment point to turning point for the team that helped you get to where you are right now?**

CALEB LOVE: We've been doing it all season long, making adjustments, adapting to certain teams or schemes that we've been playing against.

I don't think there really was a turning point. I think Coach

Lloyd has been working on our coaching, working on different ways we can attack teams and things like that. So I think we've been doing that all year. We've been working on it all year. It's been preparing us for this March Madness.

JADEN BRADLEY: I just feel like coming out and after a tough loss or something like that, teams are throwing different zones at us and stuff. We're doing a great job coming in practice, open-minded, just working and trusting each other and trusting our coaches and our game plan.

TOMMY LLOYD: I'll add to that. There was a moment. When we were over in Israel, Abu Dhabi, we knew we had a special group. The connection we had, we were able to get with each other over there, and it was special. People were maybe questioning how we were going to be chemistry-wise, and these guys are elite with chemistry. I'm really proud of them. I'm just proud to be associated with them.

**Q. Caleb and Jaden, towards last two minutes of the first half, you guys come in with four turnovers as a team. In the second half, you only had four turnovers the entire half. What did you do to adjust to their on-ball pressure that cut down on the turnovers in the second half?**

JADEN BRADLEY: Trusting in the plan. We watched the clips at halftime. They came out pressuring the ball, trying to turn us over. I feel like second half we did a great job. Our press break, not dribbling it too much, passing it, taking time off the clock.

CALEB LOVE: Same thing that J.B. said. I think we adapted to what they were doing, kind of running and jumping sporadically. We were just trying to get open for J.B. having outlets and for Kylan and Pelle, just being open and available so, you know, we can get the ball up the floor.

THE MODERATOR: We'll excuse our student-athletes. Thank you very much, gentlemen. Congratulations. Good luck next week.

Questions for Coach Lloyd.

**Q. Coach, when Dayton goes on that 10-0 run to close the half, how are you able to kind of regroup and not let emotions take over in that moment?**

TOMMY LLOYD: You got to know it's going to come. You kind of know it's going to come so you kind of pre-plan for it. You know, when we scouted them, one of the things we picked up on is they were a team of runs both ways. They

had a number of significant 8-0, 10-0 runs, and then they'd also given up a number of those as well.

We saw it in the Nevada game. I'm excited. I'm relieved, excited, however you want to put it, that we got out to a good lead so we could kind of absorb that run. They maybe had to go to their press earlier than they wanted.

Sometimes if you don't get that big lead early, say you get it a little later, they go to a press and it feels like it can unravel and you don't have time to regroup at halftime. Our guys did a good job of regrouping at halftime. We changed our plan of attack and played with better fundamentals overall in handling their pressure.

**Q. Tommy, it looked like Kylan might have hurt his hand early in the game or whatever and he was out for a little bit. When he came back in, his shot wasn't off. He wasn't showing the aggressiveness. Is that when you decided you wanted Jaden to be the guy doing that?**

TOMMY LLOYD: I was watching how the game was playing. Nothing -- I mean, Kylan made two huge free throws in that game. I kind of ended up with a lineup out there that was doing well. Sometimes you ride that.

I thought J.B. was doing a really good job of the pressure up top, handling it, not panicking. Even kind of went at 'em a couple times. Those are high-risk plays when you're attacking a press like that. But you want to go downhill with the press before they can set their defense.

I was just proud of the way J.B. responded. Kylan was awesome on Thursday. When you have a great team, it's different guys' nights on different nights.

So just really proud of the whole team and how they handled it. Kylan was great in the locker room. So no concerns from me.

**Q. If you can expand on Jaden's play. All year he's been biding his time. Today was that time.**

TOMMY LLOYD: Yeah. Maybe say he's biding his time, but when you're on an elite team, guys have to make sacrifices. That's the only way it works.

J.B.'s character is so high. He's an absolute winner. I mean, I told him after the game, I appreciate him hanging with it, and I appreciate him hanging with me. He's going to be an elite player. He's going to end up being one of the Arizona greats at the end of the day.

Him accepting that role this year has allowed us to be the

team we are today. I'm really thankful for that.

**Q. Coach, I wanted to ask you about two players. It seemed like especially there was a span in the first half where Krivas played some of his best basketball of the year, especially defensively, and then thoughts on Keshad today.**

TOMMY LLOYD: Keshad is a dawg. He's a winner. That dunk attempt was crazy, you know. But I also think it sets a little bit of a tone. Ke helps us at both end of the floor. The things we can incorporate in our defensive game plan because of him, he guards like a guard. Tough enough to guard bigs. Gets tough rebounds, finishes around the basket when he has to.

I thought the three he hit at the start of the second half was huge. I think we were at 6. He put it back up to 9 right away. That gave us a little more breathing room to get settled in in the second half.

Big Mo is coming around. Big Mo is going to be a great player. He's going through some of the normal growing pains of a young player from Europe playing high-level college basketball.

I really think he and Oumar can be a heck of a one-two punch. We've encouraged him to be more physical. And we really wanted Holmes, when O is out of the game, we wanted his rest to be going against Krivas. We wanted to go at him, and I thought he had a couple of great plays. He had a finish early that rolled around and luckily went in. He had a big dunk on a broken play.

He had big plays defensively as well. Those guys really contributed.

**Q. Coach, your bench outscored the Dayton bench 23-2 today. We've talked about J.B. We've talked about big Mo. Who else are you looking for to step up these next couple of games?**

TOMMY LLOYD: We have a pretty solid eight-man rotation. The beautiful thing is I don't have to sit there and worry about one guy playing great for us to win. That's a real luxury.

I thought KJ's minutes were impactful today. He didn't necessarily have a great game on Thursday, but he bounced back. That's what winners do. It's a cliché, but every dog has its day. In our program, I guess it's every Cat has its day.

Really proud of these guys. It's an absolute group of winners. We can't wait to play next week.



**Q. Tommy, in the second half, you told the guys to relax a little a couple, three times. How do you tell a team to relax when you guys push and like to push?**

TOMMY LLOYD: The first thing you do, I've got to tell my staff to relax. They get pretty excited. And then, I mean, listen, you can play fast with great fundamentals and that's what we strive to do.

At the end of the game, when you get that lead, you want to manage them. I think Kylan took a tough kind of shot that he's capable of making, but it was early in the shot clock. We hadn't made any passes. You have to make them guard you more. You're getting closer to the bonus.

That's how you execute at the end of the game. You have to have an understanding of time and score and have enough courage to make good plays. It's a fine line. I thought our guys did a great job as a group handling the game and managing the pressure and the scenarios at the end.

THE MODERATOR: Coach, congratulations. Good luck next week.

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